

A careful survey would no doubt add considerably to this list showing how many species had managed to survive in spite of bush fires and human interference.

—L. GLAUERT, W.A. Museum, Perth.

A Recent Observation of the Western Whip-bird.—Although limited observations of the Western Whip-bird (*Psophodes nigrogularis*) have been made in the mallee areas of Victoria, little has been published regarding the recent occurrence and habits of the bird in Western Australia. Serventy & Whittell (*Birds of Western Australia*) state that the last observations are from the Gnowangerup and Borden districts, and that the only calls heard have been a "chitter-chitter, like that of a Southern Scrub-Robin when disturbed at its nest." In Victoria the call has been described as "strange, rattling and staccato, and inclined to be harsh." Other records mention the harsh quality, distinctive from most other bird songs.

The present notes although very brief in nature add to the little previously recorded.

At dawn, on August 30, 1957, after an overnight stop 40 miles west of Ravensthorpe and 75 miles east of Borden, while travelling to Ravensthorpe along the Ongerup-Ravensthorpe road, I went for a walk to investigate the birds of the area. After observing a mixed feeding association of smaller birds a strange call drew my attention. At first I thought only one bird was calling hut upon approaching closer I found there were actually two birds. They were excessively shy but after much stalking a satisfactory description was recorded. The most distinct colour pattern in the plumage was a black throat with a narrow white border. White tips to the tail feathers were noticeable in flight, and occasionally a slight crest was erected. These facts together with a more general description also recorded satisfied me that I had come upon some Whip-birds.

As the birds moved through the mallee scrub at about chest height they gave the dual song mentioned earlier. This was made up of 6 to 8 whistling notes, the first call being 3 or 4 notes, immediately answered by a call of similar duration and quality but consisting of different notes. I found that I could quite easily imitate the song in an ordinary whistle.

On occasion the birds were seen to lean farther than normal over the branch they perched upon and to lift their tails slightly. This may have been some form of display associated with breeding, which at that time had probably started (the species is recorded as an early breeder, mid-July to August), or may have been due to the birds becoming unbalanced while perching, cf. the similar tail action of the Kookaburra. As they have previously been recorded more as ground dwellers, reluctant to fly and preferring to run when disturbed, the latter explanation may be quite plausible.

—ERIC LINDGREN, Mt. Barker